

OHIO MENNONITE EVANGEL

News & Views of Ohio Conference

SEPT/OCT 2017



ohiomennoniteconference.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- 2 Editorial
MyNeighbor helps
with giving
- 4 Ohio Mennonite
Women to dis-
solve organization
- 5 Time of
Celebration
- 6 Suggest a program
Mennonite Arts
Weekend
Youth Retreat
- 7 About people
- 8 Back page
briefings

Work camp has both service and discipleship components

A mission trip without the travel

For many congregations, a summer service trip for the youth group is a time-honored tradition. Sharon Mennonite Church in Plain City is following that tradition, but with a difference. The service, spiritual growth and group bonding which often occur during a summer service trip are still present, but the travel part is not.

This summer for the second year in a row, the youth

group at Sharon Mennonite participated in something called the FUEL Work Camp right in their home community. (FUEL is an acronym for the youth group's name, which is based on the slogan "fully understanding eternal life.")

During work camp, participants stayed at the church during the week and worked on projects for people in the local community.

Continued on page 3



Roof repair was just one of the projects that Sharon Mennonite work camp participants completed.

Zion minister to volunteer as missional consultant

Jessica Schrock-Ringenberg, minister at Zion Mennonite Church in Archbold, has agreed to serve the Ohio Conference as a part-time missional consultant for a one-year period, beginning in October 2017. She will be volunteering her time in this capacity three to four days per month.

At the 2017 Annual Conference Assembly in March, delegates affirmed a direction statement which included this goal: "We will put our best energy into being and becoming missional congregations together." As missional consultant, Jessica will be working with the Missional Planning Team and Conference leadership to facilitate this process.

Continued on page 5



Jessica Schrock-Ringenberg, minister at Zion Mennonite Church, talks to delegates at Annual Conference Assembly 2017.

EDITORIAL

How are we joining God in mission?



VOL. LXXI, NO. 5

SEPT/OCT 2017

Editor: Ann H. Leaman

Ohio Mennonite Evangel (USPS 404-500) is published six times per year by the Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA, Box 210, Kidron OH 44636, telephone (330) 857-5421.

All material for publication should be submitted to the editor at 5854 Sunland St. NE, Louisville OH 44641, or via telephone: 330-453-0150, or e-mail: ohioevangel@gmail.com, one month prior to desired publication date.

Ohio Mennonite Evangel is distributed to all households of Ohio Conference congregations, other interested individuals and church agencies.

Send subscription information and address changes to the editor at ohioevangel@gmail.com.

The addition of a missional consultant for the Ohio Conference underscores the Conference's commitment to becoming missional congregations together. But how focused are our individual congregations on joining God in mission?

One way to begin the process is to consider the following questions for discernment which were developed as part of the Ohio Conference's Year of Mission. They can be found on the Conference website under "Gathered and Sent." If your congregation has not thought about these questions yet, now is a great time to do so.

1. Who are we as a church?
2. What is one or more unique contribution(s) our church has to offer the local community?
3. What needs do we see in our community that God might be calling us to address?
4. Who do we aspire to be as a church, and how do we get there?
5. Is there potential for missional partnerships with other local ministries or organizations?
6. How can we support and celebrate the missional work our congregants are already doing?
7. Which missional opportunities match our Anabaptist commitments to the way of Jesus, transformative community, and peace-making?
8. What ways can we develop a missional culture in our congregation?
9. How can we include all age groups in our missional work?
10. What is an area of missional focus that our entire congregation can support?

MyNeighbor helps charitable contributions add up

GOSHEN, Indiana – The new MyNeighbor credit card from Everence® Federal Credit Union helps people boost their generosity while making their usual purchases. For every purchase made with the MyNeighbor credit card, Everence will donate 1.5 percent of the transaction

total to the charity of the cardholder's choice.

Since the MyNeighbor program began at the end of April 2017, more than \$81,000 has been generated for churches, nonprofits and other Neighbors.

The MyNeighbor charitable contribution feature applies to both personal and busi-

ness credit cards from Everence Federal Credit Union. MyNeighbor cardholders have thousands of charitable organizations to choose from when they go online to choose the one that will receive donations.

For more information about MyNeighbor, visit everence.com/MyNeighbor or call (800) 451-5719. ■

Personnel of the Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA

Moderator: Bob Sauder — sauderbob2@gmail.com
 Assistant Moderator: Thomas Dunn — thomas@crownhillmennonite.com
 Credentialing Ministry Chair: Andy Stoner — rpandy@iuno.com
 Gifts Discernment Ministry Chair: Mel Hathaway — smcpastor@embarqmail.com
 Stewardship Ministry Co-Chair: Melanie Miller — mgmiller@gmail.com
 Regional Pastor: Ralph Reinford — ralphreinford@gmail.com
 Regional Pastor: Cliff Brubaker — cliffbru7@gmail.com
 Administrative Secretary: Judy King — ohmc@zoominternet.net
 Finance Coordinator: Stan Helmuth — cbohl1@zoominternet.net
 Conference Editor: Ann Leaman — ohioevangel@gmail.com
 Coordinator of Volunteers: Alys Short — alysashort@gmail.com

Work camp

Continued from page 1

Some of the projects the group worked on include building wheelchair ramps, mobile home repair and renovation, landscaping, house painting, sidewalk installation, and work for the local food pantry.

In addition to adult leaders, work camp participants include youth in middle school and high school, and post-high young adults. This summer during the week of June 17-23 about 60 people were involved in the work camp, including the adult leaders. Sharon Mennonite's youth pastor, Jared Chase, noted that 43 youth and young adults participated in work camp this year, including about 20 guests. Those guests are members of other church youth groups in the area, as well as some youth who are not part of any other youth group.

In 2015 the Sharon youth group participated in a work camp run by Jackson Area Ministries, and they spent the week working on projects to benefit people in that community. After that experience, participants from Sharon Mennonite said, "We can do this on our own." The next summer they held the first work camp based at the church.

One reason the program has worked so well is because the Sharon congregation has adults in the congregation who have expertise in some of the projects. For example, one member of the congregation has designed the plans for the wheelchair ramps and ordered the materials needed for those projects. In addition, the congregation has engaged local businesses in the effort, and



Work camp participants were able to make repairs for community members who were unable to do the repairs themselves, either for physical or financial reasons. Some local businesses partnered with Sharon Mennonite to provide finances and materials for some of the work camp projects.

they have donated some of the materials.

While the work accomplished during work camp is important, it is far from the only purpose of the week spent together. Sharon's work camp also has a discipleship component. Each year work camp has a theme, often based on a Christian song. The themes for the past two years were "Do Something" and "Here's my Heart, Lord." Each day of work camp, participants have devotions together, and small groups meet together.

Youth Pastor Jared Chase noted that not only do the youth participate in devotional times, but they also lead devotions. Small groups take turns leading, often presenting a skit and a brief meditation.

"Our hope is to include other Ohio Conference churches in this experience," said Jared

Chase. If you are interested in learning more about Sharon's missional work camp or you would like help setting up a missional work camp in your community, contact Jared Chase at jchase2882@gmail.com or 614-873-8290 (Sharon Mennonite's phone number).

If you would like to hear more about Sharon's work camp, you can listen to an Ohio Conference Cast podcast featuring an interview with Jared Chase, as well as Ben Yoder, summer intern at Sharon Mennonite; KC Theiss, an elder at Sharon Mennonite; and Johnathan Beachy, a newly licensed nurse. The podcast is titled "[Missional Work Camp — You can do this!](#)" This podcast and all other Ohio Conference Cast podcasts can be found on the Ohio Conference website: <https://ohiomennoniteconference.org/podcasts>. ■

Ohio Mennonite Women Executive Board decides to dissolve the organization

July 29, 2017

Dear Ohio Mennonite Women,

The Ohio Mennonite Women have been meeting for many years, to accomplish its primary mission and vision: “To minister to the women of Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA, by resourcing women’s groups and individual women, as we nurture our life in Christ, study the Bible, utilize our gifts, hear each other, and engage in mission and service.”

The organization has touched many lives over the years by providing publications, resources for women’s groups, mission opportunities and special program opportunities — a denominational forum for connecting women in Ohio Conference. Women have prayed for and financially supported OMW, missionaries and various agencies over the years. We have served well! God has been present and directed the activities of the OMW. And this is good!

For the last several years, the organization’s members have aged, women’s lives, generations and roles have changed. The current Co-chairs and Executive Board members of OMW have spent countless hours in prayer and discern-

ment as they have made many contacts, advertised through various methods, and spent hours exploring the possibilities of ongoing leadership. Over the years members on the Board have extended their terms, served in multiple roles to fill vacancies, and recently have tried without success, to find new leaders. Without leadership, our organization cannot continue. Other conference women’s groups are experiencing similar struggles.

So at this time, after much processing, prayer and discernment, it is with sadness that the OMW Executive Board has made the difficult decision to dissolve the organization of the Ohio Mennonite Women. Various alternate models were explored; counsel from the constituency on various occasions was sought, as well as counsel from the Director of the Mennonite Women USA and Conference pastors. We thank you for your support and ask for ongoing prayers as we discern and make decisions related to organizational dissolution, on your behalf. May God be honored throughout this process.

The Board will proceed with resolving expenses as follows: support scholarships for the attendees of the 2017 Girls’ Jamboree and Women’s Retreat; resolve all outstanding expenses and obligations, and disperse remaining funds to the



missionaries and agencies currently supported by OMW. Future contributions can be made directly to these entities. Addresses and more information will be available in the final OMW Newsletter and on the [Conference website](#).

We extend our sincere appreciation to ALL for your support over the years, and to ALL who have provided leadership to OMW. Thank you! We encourage each congregation to explore ways to empower local women’s activities. Ask yourself these and other questions: Are there activities you can plan locally? Can you partner with other congregations in your area to plan activities? Can more “mature” women mentor younger ones? Plan a women’s potluck. Go out for coffee. Plan a “comforter blitz.” Be creative!!!

As a way to honor our organization, Ohio Mennonite Women, we invite you to join in “A

“We
encourage
each
congregation
to explore
ways to
empower local
women’s
activities.”

Continued on page 5

Missional consultant

Continued from page 1

Jessica's service with the Ohio Conference will coincide with her sabbatical from Zion Mennonite and a training opportunity for her with Exponential, an organization which focuses on church planting and church multiplication. (See <https://exponential.org> for more information about Exponential.)

Jessica recently was accepted into the Exponential Multiplier Cohorts: Emerging Leaders 2017-2018 Learning Community. Participation is by invitation

only through a sponsoring leader connected with Exponential. Jessica was honored to be nominated by Alan Hirsch, one of the speakers at Ohio Conference's missional conference in March 2017. This training with Exponential will help guide her work with Ohio Conference.

Talking and writing about missional topics is nothing new for Jessica. She has been one of the bloggers on the website for *The Mennonite*. To see what she has to say about missional church,

read her article on the Ohio Conference website titled "[Missional Church: The fad that just won't go away.](#)"

Jessica also has talked about missional topics in several episodes of the Ohio Conference Cast podcast. Click on the links below to listen:

- [Jessica breaks things](#)
- [What happened at CLC this time?](#)
- [Jessica talks about missional VBS \(and pigs\)](#) ■

Ohio Mennonite Women

Continued from page 4

Time of Celebration" at the Women's Retreat at Camp Luz, Sept. 15-17, 2017. We encourage you to come, to share past stories, pictures and memories of the blessings you have received through OMW.

In Christ,

Ohio Mennonite Women
Executive Board

Co-Chairs, Acting Vice-co-chair, Acting Secretary:
Willie Stoltzfus: stoltzfus.willie@gmail.com

Roxanne Kauffman:
roxykauff@gmail.com

Treasurer: Melanie Miller

Day of Inspiration Coordinators
A & B: Myrna Ramseyer and
Angela Steiner ■

A Time of Celebration
Ohio Mennonite Women!
Please come and celebrate!

Who: All Ohio Mennonite Women are invited!

What: A time to remember, tell stories and celebrate the accomplishments of OMW.

Where: Camp Luz - Chapel

When: Saturday, September 16th at 3:30 pm

What can you do?

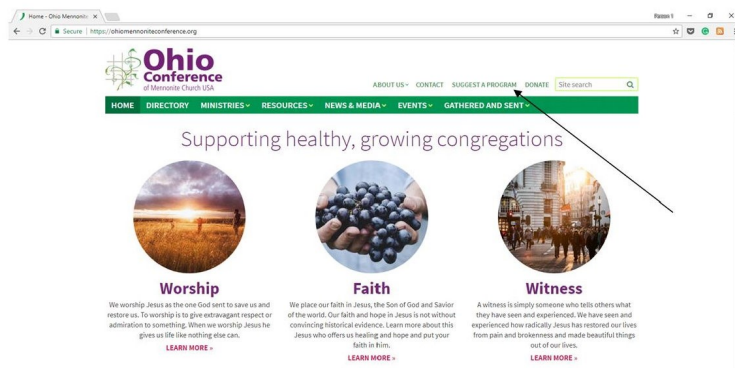
Come! Bring your memories, pictures and memorabilia. Come and share your stories: how OMW impacted your life, a special story about OMW, friendships you have made, missionaries and service projects you have supported because of OMW, a blessing you received through OMW.

Let's celebrate the many years of God's presence
among the Ohio Mennonite Women!



Share your ideas for programs

To suggest an idea for a retreat, seminar, training session or speaker, use the “Suggest a Program” button on the home page of the Ohio Conference website.



To submit your idea, use the “Suggest a Program” button on the Ohio Conference website. This form is intended to allow people from the Ohio Conference to suggest retreats, seminars, training sessions, or speakers that they would find helpful. You can find the “Suggest a Program” button on the top menu of the Ohio Conference home page (www.ohiomennoniteconference.org). ■

Do you have an idea for a program that you would like Ohio Conference to provide? Share

your idea with the Ohio Conference Ministry Development Team.

Mennonite Arts Weekend to feature wide variety

The Mennonite Arts Weekend features written, musical and visual arts. At left, Zac Nafziger displays stained glass panels.



Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship will hold the 14th Mennonite Arts Weekend Feb. 2-4, 2018, at Pleasant Ridge Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati. A variety of writers, actors, composers, musicians and visual artists will be featured during the weekend. Registration cost is \$75 per person (\$65 before Jan. 13) and \$55 for students (\$45 before Jan. 13). For more information, see www.mennoniteartsweekend.org. ■

Youth Retreat will look to the positive

Matthew Neuenschwander, program director at Camp Luz, will be the featured speaker at the Camp Luz Youth Retreat on Nov. 10-12, 2017.

The theme for the weekend retreat will be “It’s a Mindset,” based on Romans 12:2. During the weekend youth will be challenged to look to the positive in

a world that can be full of the negative.

Cost is \$90 per youth and \$30 per sponsor. For more details, see the Camp Luz website at www.campluz.com. ■

ABOUT PEOPLE

Pastoral notes



Rob Burdette was installed as transitional pastor at Sharon Mennonite Church in Plain City on Sunday, Aug. 13, during the morning worship service. During the Sunday school hour, Rob and his wife, Patty, shared some of their life story, and

Rob talked about his plans for his work with the congregation.

During the morning worship service, Rob preached the sermon, titled "Sync or Swim," based on Matthew 14:22-33. Regional Pastor Cliff Brubaker led the installation ceremony

following the sermon. The congregation held a carry-in lunch following the worship service.

Previously Rob has served as interim or transitional pastor for 10 congregations in Ohio, Indiana, Kansas, Virginia, and Colorado. ■

Regional Pastor Cliff Brubaker talks to the Sharon Mennonite Church congregation at the installation of Rob Burdette (third from left) as transitional pastor on Aug. 13. Also pictured left to right are Sarah Chase, Youth Pastor Jared Chase, Patty Burdette and the members of Sharon Mennonite's Spiritual Leadership Team.

Matthew Reed was installed as pastor of Beech Mennonite Church in Louisville on Sunday, Aug. 20, during the morning worship service. Regional Pastor Ralph Reinford led the installation ceremony. Matt and his wife, Janet, were affirmed as members of the congregation. Matt preached the sermon, based on John 3:1-8, and Janet Reed and Megan Frederick led a special song, "The Lord our God," during the offering.

Matt and Janet are the parents of three daughters, Anna, Rachel and Sarah.

A graduate of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Matt most recently served as pastor



of East Nimishillen Church of the Brethren in Canton. He has also worked as a church planter, and served as pastor of

Wakeman Congregational Church in Wakeman, Ohio, and associate/youth pastor of Immanuel Church in Chelmsford, Massachusetts. ■

Matthew Reed was installed as pastor of Beech Mennonite Church in Louisville on Sunday, Aug. 20. At left, Jim Witmer, elder, speaks during the affirmation of Matthew and Janet Reed as members of the congregation.

Conference Calendar

SEPT

15-17 Women's Retreat, Camp Luz, Kidron

16-17 Berlin Mennonite Church 100th Anniversary Celebration, Berlin Mennonite

OCT

21 Adriel Benefit Auction, Adriel, West Liberty

NOV

10-12 Pastor-Spouse Retreat, Mohican State Park Lodge, Perrysville

10-12 Youth Retreat, Camp Luz, Kidron

JAN 2018

12-14 Jr. High Retreat, Camp Luz, Kidron

19-20 Mother-Daughter Retreat, Camp Luz, Kidron

MAR

8-9 Missional Conference, Bluffton University, Bluffton

9-10 Annual Conference Assembly, Bluffton University, Bluffton

APR

6-8 Men's Retreat, Camp Luz, Kidron

27-28 Father-Son Retreat, Camp Luz, Kidron

The Ohio Conference will hold its 2018 Annual Conference Assembly (ACA) March 9-10 at Bluffton University. The theme for the 2018 ACA will be "Gathered and Sent," based on 1 Peter 2:9-10 and Luke 10:1-12. ACA will be preceded by a missional conference at Bluffton University March 8-9.

AMBS online short course: Understanding Anabaptist approaches to Scripture: Oct. 25 – Dec. 12, 2017. The early Anabaptists' approaches to Scripture were both similar to and different from those of Catholics and other Protestants. Loren Johns, Ph.D., will lead this interactive online Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary short course on understanding these approaches in light of today. The cost is \$200 before Oct. 4, and \$250 after. CEUs are available. See www.ambs.edu/lifelong-learning/anabaptist-short-courses.

The Ohio Conference Ministry Development Team (MDT) has awarded six grants totaling \$22,100. See <http://bit.ly/OCMinistryGrants> for details. ■

Back page briefings...

The latest episode of the PeaceLab podcast focuses on Mennonite Disaster Service's response to Hurricane Harvey in Texas. In this episode, co-hosts Hannah Heinzekehr and Jason Boone talk with Kevin King, executive di-

rector of Mennonite Disaster Service. PeaceLab is a joint venture of *The Mennonite Inc.* and the Peace and Justice Support Network. Go to <http://bit.ly/PeaceLabMDS> to listen to this episode.

OHIO MENNONITE
EVANGEL
News & Views of Ohio Conference

For more Ohio Conference news, visit the Ohio Conference website:
ohiomennoniteconference.org